

## Federal Personnel Manual System

FPM Letter 410-30

**SUBJECT:** Subsistence Payments for Training Assignments

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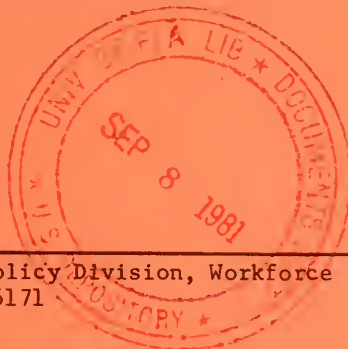
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Chapter 410

**RETAIN UNTIL SUPERSEDED**

Washington, D. C. 20415  
September 3, 1981

### Heads of Departments and Independent Establishments:

1. This letter amends part 410 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (Attachment 1), and chapter 410 of the Federal Personnel Manual (Attachment 2), to prescribe alternative methods of subsistence payments for training assignments.
2. Extended training assignments place employees in a special situation where lodging and meals at reduced rates are generally available from the training institutions themselves or from other nearby facilities. Under the regulation agencies would have the following options for making subsistence payments for training assignments lasting more than 30 days:
  - a. If an agency chooses to pay a standardized rate, it may pay either:
    - (i) 55 percent of the full per diem rate--or, if the training facility is in a designated high rate geographical area, 55 percent of the prescribed maximum daily rate for that area--as specified by the Federal Travel Regulations; or
    - (ii) Another standardized payment determined by the agency and based on survey data of actual subsistence expenses for a geographical area if the agency has a large number of employees trained in that area.
  - b. If an agency chooses to make other than standardized payments, it may pay all or a part of actual subsistence expenses, provided that any payment greater than the 55-percent rate of a(i) above is made only after documentation of the circumstances leading the agency to the conclusion that a higher payment would be in the public interest.
3. The General Services Administration's Federal Travel Regulations are to be amended to reflect the attached amendment of part 410 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations. The attached changes for part 410 and chapter 410 of the Federal Personnel Manual are effective on September 25, 1981. This FPM Letter should be transmitted to officials under your jurisdiction who are responsible for administering travel, subsistence and transportation payments to employees assigned to training as a means of alerting them to the forthcoming change in the Federal Travel Regulations.



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Attachments

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FEDERAL PERSONNEL MANUAL SUPPLEMENT 990-1 BOOK III

PART 410. TRAINING

Part 410 is amended as follows:

Current sections 410.603 and 410.604 are renumbered 410.604 and 410.605.

A new section 410.603 is inserted to read as follows:

§410.603 Subsistence payments for extended training assignments.

(a) An agency has the authority to pay all or--if agreed to by the employee--a part of actual subsistence expenses of an employee assigned to training at a temporary duty station. If an agency makes such payments during an assignment lasting more than 30 calendar days, paragraph (b) or (c) of this section shall apply. The agreed rate of payment shall be applicable from the first day of the assignment. An agency may adjust an agreed rate of payment when circumstances so justify provided any decrease in the rate of payment is agreed to by the employee. If lodging or meal costs are included in the fees paid to the training institution an appropriate reduction shall be made from any standardized subsistence payments.

(b) When standardized subsistence payments are made:

(1) An agency may pay 55 percent of the full per diem rate specified by the Federal Travel Regulations or, if the training facility is in a designated high rate geographical area (HRGA), 55 percent of the prescribed maximum daily rate specified for that area by the Federal Travel Regulations; or

(2) Where an agency has large numbers of employees trained at facilities in a single area, the agency may make a standardized payment determined by the agency and based on survey data of actual subsistence expenses for that area, not exceeding the full per diem or the prescribed maximum HRGA rate specified for that area by the Federal Travel Regulations.

(c) When an agency decides to make other than standardized payments, it may pay all or part of actual subsistence expenses including the cost of acceptable lodging and meals provided by the training facility or other nearby facility plus a Miscellaneous Subsistence Expenses payment. Any payment greater than the 55-percent rate authorized in paragraph (b)(1) may be made only after documentation of the circumstances (e.g. unavailability of acceptable lower cost lodging) leading the agency to the conclusion that the higher payment would be in the public interest. An agency shall not make any payment above the ceiling imposed by 5 U.S.C. 5702(c).



FEDERAL PERSONNEL MANUAL  
CHAPTER 410. TRAINING

(Pertinent sections of FPM chapter 410 are reprinted below in the column at right with lines drawn through deleted passages. New material appears in the column at left and is inserted as indicated.)

b. Subsistence. An employee assigned to training at a geographical location away from his or her designated post of duty may be paid per diem while traveling from the designated post of duty to the place of training at the commencement of the period of training and from the place of training to the designated post of duty at the end of the period of training. In addition, the employee may be paid subsistence expenses during the period of training if his or her immediate family, household goods, and personal effects are not transported by the agency to the place of training (see subsection e of this section). An agency may not pay subsistence expenses higher than the ceiling imposed by 5 U.S.C. 5702(c). Payments may be made as follows:

(1) Training assignments of 30 days or less. An agency may pay actual subsistence expenses or--if agreed to by the employee--a part of such expenses. In lieu of payment for all or part of actual expenses, an agency may pay per diem in accordance with subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code (or, for commissioned officers of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in accordance with sections 404 and 405 of title 37, United States Code, and the Joint Travel Regulations for the Uniformed Services).

(2) Training assignments of more than 30 days. An agency may pay actual subsistence expenses or--if agreed to by the employee--a part of such expenses. If lodging or meal costs are included in the fees paid to the training institution, an appropriate reduction shall be made from any standardized payment listed below. An agency may adjust an agreed rate of payment when circumstances so justify provided any decrease in the rate of payment is agreed to by the employee. An agency may pay from the first day of an assignment:

(a) 55 percent of the full per diem rate--or, if the training facility is in a designated high rate

6-3. EXPENSES OTHER THAN  
EMPLOYEE'S PAY

a. Travel. The expenses of an employee's travel may be paid in accordance with subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code (or, for commissioned officers of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in accordance with sections 404 and 405 of title 37, United States Code, and the Joint Travel Regulations for the Uniformed Services).<sup>1</sup>

~~b. Per diem. Per diem in lieu of subsistence may be paid in accordance with subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code (or, for commissioned officers of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in accordance with sections 404 and 405 of title 37, United States Code, and the Joint Travel~~

<sup>1</sup> Agencies are governed by the Federal Travel Regulations issued by the General Services Administration in paying these costs.



geographical area (HRGA), 55 percent of the prescribed maximum daily rate for that area--specified by the Federal Travel Regulations; or

- (b) Any other standardized payment determined by the agency and based on survey data of actual subsistence expenses for a geographical area if the agency has a large number of employees trained in that area, but not exceeding the full per diem or the prescribed maximum daily rate specified for that area by the Federal Travel Regulations; or
- (c) All or part of actual subsistence expenses, provided that any payment greater than the 55-percent rate outlined in subparagraph (a) above is made only after documentation of the circumstances (e.g., unavailability of acceptable lower cost lodging) leading the agency to the conclusion that the greater payment would be in the public interest. An agency may have a policy of paying any set amount below the 55-percent rate-- e.g., \$20.00 a day--as part payment towards subsistence expenses of any employee who accepts a training assignment of any length at that set payment.

than the estimated aggregate subsistence pay-

~~Regulations for the Uniformed Services). An employee assigned to training at a geographic location away from his designated post of duty may be paid per diem while traveling from the designated post of duty to the place of training at the commencement of the period of training and from the place of training to his designated post of duty at the end of the period of training. In addition, he may be paid per diem during the period of training if his immediate family, household goods, and personal effects are not transported by his agency to the place of training (see subsection e of this section).<sup>1</sup>~~

c. **Transportation costs.** Transportation of immediate family, household goods and personal effects, packing, crating, temporary storage, drayage, and unpacking may be paid in accordance with section 5724 of title 5, United States Code →(or, for commissioned officers of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in accordance with← sections 406 and 409 of title 37, United States Code, and the Joint Travel Regulations for the Uniformed Services), whenever the estimated costs of the transportation and related services are less than the estimated aggregate per diem payments for the period of training →(see subsection e of this section).<sup>1</sup>←

d. **Fees, services, →and facilities.** Costs of the following may be paid:

- (1) Tuition and matriculation fees—see, however, the restrictions in section 5-2c(2).←
- (2) Library and laboratory services.
- (3) Purchase or rental of books, materials, and supplies.
- (4) Other services or facilities directly related to the training. →As an example, an examination fee may be paid if the examination is used as a diagnostic tool to determine deficiencies in knowledges and skills needed by an employee for the performance of official duties so as to ascertain his training needs when the agency is unable to determine those needs through supervisory evaluation or other available agency appraisal system or when such

<sup>1</sup> Agencies are governed by the Federal Travel Regulations issued by the General Services Administration in paying these costs.

evaluation or appraisal system would be costly. The cost of an examination would not otherwise be payable except when the cost of the examination is inextricably mixed with the cost of a program of training or when the examination process itself is designed to impart knowledges and skills to the examinee.←

(5) A membership fee to the extent the fee is a necessary cost directly related to the training itself or that payment of the fee is a condition precedent to undertaking the training.

e. Relationship between subsistence and trans-

subsistence payments for a period of training or,

exceed the total . . . /subsistence/ allowance payments

(3) Estimating aggregate subsistence payments.

is the aggregate subsistence payable to the employee for the period of training. Where no other specific subsistence payment rate is agreed upon by the agency and the employee, the aggregate amount shall be computed on the basis of allowable payments under subparagraph b(2)(a) of this section. Furthermore, in estimating aggregate payments, the following must be

~~e. Relationship between per diem and transportation costs.~~ (1) *Mutually exclusive costs.* The Comptroller General has ruled that an employee selected for training may receive ~~per diem payments for a period of training or,~~ within the limitation described in paragraph (2) of this subsection, payment for the costs of transportation of the employee's family and household goods and personal effects to and from the place of training, but *not both* (39 Comp. Gen. 140).

(2) *Limitation on transportation costs.* The Comptroller General has ruled (40 Comp. Gen. 714) that "the cost that an agency may pay for the transportation of dependents and household effects incident to an employee's receiving training at a particular location may not exceed the total per diem allowance payable to the employee otherwise could have received while undergoing such training at the location had he not elected to accept in lieu thereof the allowance for transportation of his immediate family and household effects."

~~(3) Estimating aggregate per diem payments.~~ As indicated in paragraph (2) of this subsection the maximum amount that may be paid for the transportation of an employee's immediate family and household goods and personal effects ~~is the aggregate per diem payable to the employee for the period of training. In estimating those per diem payments, the following must be kept in mind:~~

(a) Per diem payments to the employee covering his travel to and from the place of training are *not* counted (see 40 Comp. Gen. 714).



(b) Per diem payments to the employee for a period while in a travel status *away* from the place of training are *not* counted (see 40 Comp. Gen. 714).

~~(c) The Federal Travel Regulations (see footnote 1 on page 410-26) assign responsibility to each agency to authorize only such per diem allowances as are justified by the circumstances affecting the travel. In estimating the aggregate per diem payable to an employee for a period of training, an agency would be required to reduce the per diem rate for a period of training at a place where lodging and meals can be obtained at lower costs during an extended stay (see Federal Travel Regulations and a decision of the Comptroller General concerning these regulations 30 Comp. Gen. 140).~~

#### 6-4. PROTECTION OF GOVERNMENT'S INTERESTS

The head of each agency is required to establish the procedure he considers necessary

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